

RHODA BARNES to MILTON BARNES

NOTE: The animosity towards General Sherman expressed in this letter by Rhoda dates at least from January. (See her letter to Milton dated January 26, 1865). Later the occasion was his truce terms for Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston (See Milton Barnes to Rhoda Barnes, April 26, 1865 and May 1, 1865). Rhoda disparagingly refers to the 78th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment and its former commander, Major General Mortimer D. Leggett. Long a resident of nearby Zanesville, Ohio, Leggett was a distinguished educator and lawyer prior to the war. Rhoda's reference to Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton's son is unclear, though Stanton was a native of Ohio. The "Red River Battle," as previously noted, was that in which Rhoda's "Uncle Joe" of the 96th Ohio was killed. (See Rhoda Barnes to Milton Barnes, June 6, 1864).

"Our dear little rustic home"

April 11th 1865

My darling husband -

have you heard the glad tidings from Richmond? I feel like crying or singing ["Hail Columbia - Yankee Doodle" - and all such glorious old national airs - or some such things to manifest my very peculiar feelings and emotions, and yet I am just as calm in manner outwardly as ever you saw me - You know I dont make very boisterous demonstrations when I am excited - I never yet had any great cause for joy - that with it I did not have something to dampen & cool any pronness [sic] to a flush of hilarity such as some folks indulge in - There is ever some low murmuring voice of sadness or sympathy to check my joyousness - perhaps it is better so - I think I'm just as glad and as thankful - that the long [be] sieged Capital city of Rebeldom, has at last fallen into the rightful hands - although I did'nt hurrah - nor cry nor even laugh - only a pleased smile - nor did'nt get drunk as so many of our citizens did - not any to their honor I think - an odd proof of loyalty that is - for a man to drink stuff that robs him of his

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usual allowance of sense & degrades him far below a decent dog - a beautiful fix to get into to rejoice over a victory that has cost - oh who dare try to tell the cost, God who knoweth the crushed hearts & seeth the tears of those who have given ~~of~~ their all - given a sacrifice to them more dear, more precious than even their own life - He alone can compute the cost of to us such an important victory - Mrs Neeland said she would freely have forgiven her husband if on such an occasion he had been carried home insensible as many were - I could'nt agree with her - I've never yet known of a circumstance that rendered a man excusable for drowning his manhood - all that's pure, noble, reliable or lovable in (I dont know how much) filthy drugged whiskey - Bah! I've perfect contempt for such a man - I never could respect nor love such a man - but I dont think I shall ever be so tried, shall I my dear old darling? you will be "one of the very few gentlemen who will come out of the army ~~as~~ refined as when they went into it" wont you? & better too I trust[,] my love - Mr Lyons & J.K Casey were two I heard of being helped home - Friend Davis tells that Friday night[,] [November 7] our second illumination, he took a girl home & she helped to steady him as they walked up ^[the] street, when they went into her house he began to get sick - & said he must go - he started for the front door - but she led him to the back door, & then he said "I just more than puked all over the yard" - now was'nt that the very quintessence [sic] of a good time rejoicing[?] - how disgusting! what a delicate regard for the respect of one of the fairer sex - whom every one supposes to have

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been Miss Mary Savage -

After the news came that Lee & his army had surrendered - bells were rung violently &c &c - & notice sent around for a general illumination - we lit up our windows very nicely but I did'nt go down town - I got tired of the excitement the other night - Those [sic] is to be something more of the same sort on the 13th according to [Governor] Brough's proclamation - you know that is the day of the celebration at Fort Sumpter [sic] [Sumter] - there is to be a meeting of Thanksgiving in [the] day time - that I think is as it ought to be - I am so anx[ious] to hear where you are & what you think of it - Im in great hopes that you'll not have anything to do where you are even if it is not true that Lee has surrendered - Some Folks are sanguine enough to think that the war is about over - that our gallant old veterans will be home in a month or two, & poor old Grandpapa says we'll soon get letters telling us when they are coming - I cannot realize it to be that good - can you[,] love? But I feel quietly hopeful and cheerful - but poor Mother [-] she is glad & still she is so sorry - Last Saturday was the anniversary of that sad Red River battle - it seemed to bring all Mother's trouble back fresh again - she cries & cries so much ~~||~~ through sympathy with her I cannot seem as joyful as I feel - my glad anticipations I have to keep all to myself - it seems to vex her -

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Tirza is very delighted with the lights & noise - & says
["]Hurrah for Lincoln["] of her own accord - My admiration just now
is for Grant & Sheridan - I am so glad that Richmond was taken before
Sherman got around there - I did'nt want him & his army to have that
honor - I was reading in the paper this morning - some blows about
Sherman [-] he was going somewhere & his private company was Maj' Gen'
Leggett[,] Stanton[']s son & some others - do tell me if that is Douglass'
hobby - If so, stuff for Maj[or] Gen's [sic] must be scarce down there
indeed - from Sherman down to the lowest private in the 78th are a set of
braggadocios - it is perfectly disgusting - for a moment I had a notion to
throw paper & all in the fire - but I suppose it is no use to let such things
provoke one - Your letter written near Knoxville came in good time - another
instance of the mercy of God in it - Oh my love - let us try to be thankful
[sic] - & hope & trust that soon[,], very soon[,], [we] will be restored to
each other & happy[.]

[Top of same page:]

Charlie told me to write you that he'd lost his resignation papers -
[top of pages 3 & 2:] and wanted you to slip those at H'dquarters & send him
- said he'd written to you -- I would'nt go to any risk to please him so -
you [have] done enough for him, & have no right to replace by stealth what
he has lost by carelessness, or perhaps pretends he has lost it[.]

[Top of page 1:]

I heard from Ruth yesterday - she said she'd write to you but she'd

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lost your address - I could'nt but laugh, for that is always her say so -
& we've given it so often she [had] been in Wheeling, visiting Clark
[Barnes] in the Hospital - he is wardmaster [-] & the Adams - They'd
heard that Frank was safe after the first of the fighting - & were ex-
pecting James home discharged - They hav'nt bought any farm yet & are
going to stay where they are this year - I wrote twice last week - hope
you'll get all I sent [-] I will write again Friday - after the fuss -
Tis whispered that [Rev.] Milligan is going to resign - tis too good I
fear - Good bye love - Your own loving & true Rhoda -